

DRINKS, DESIGN, AND DIVERSITY: USING TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING  
TO ENCOURAGE INCLUSIVITY IN INDIANA'S CRAFT BEER INDUSTRY

A CREATIVE PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

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MASTER OF ARTS

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## Abstract

**CREATIVE PROJECT:** Drinks, Design, and Diversity: Using Transmedia Storytelling to Encourage Inclusivity in Indiana's Craft Beer Industry

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Due to perceived demographic disparities that exist within the beer industry, this project sought to understand how employees in the craft beer industry in Indiana perceive inclusivity and empathy. The project was designed around interviews with members of Indiana's craft beer industry. This project used affinity mapping to determine important factors that deal with perceived inclusivity. A design campaign comprised of can labels and posters was created as a means to promote the project and continue the narrative. A website was created to house all elements of the project. It was found that disparities do exist within craft beer in Indiana, but industry workers are unaware of what actionable steps to take in order to fix the problem. Two tabletop game elements were designed in order to explore a way to encourage inclusivity.

*Keywords:* craft beer, inclusivity, empathy, transmedia storytelling, design, service industry, customer relations, employee relations

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## Introduction

*“If craft beer wants to grow and prosper, we need to get out of our comfort zone and court new audiences.” — Brewer Kevin Blodger (Roth, 2018)*

Despite its rise as a cultural and economic phenomenon, the craft brewing industry suffers from an apparent lack of diversity among employees and patrons. The cultural, economic, racial and gender bubbles that appear to surround each brewery do not mingle as well as they might in a cold lager, but interest in blending them may be coming to a head. Tired Hands, a brewery in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, started an internship in 2018 for ethnic and racial minorities to encourage diverse participation in breweries as a workplace (Roth, 2018). Although the program garnered praise, it also received backlash on social media from people arguing that the campaign was too targeted toward beer-culture minorities (Tired Hands Brewing, 2016).

The craft beer industry is a relatively modern industry, with roots starting in the 1970s when Jack McAuliffe opened what is considered to be the first craft brewery in the United States. Although New Albion Brewery only stayed open from 1976 to 1982, this is seen as the beginning of craft beer in the United States (Mosher, 2017). Currently, there are over 7,000 craft breweries in the United States and about 70,000 people who work in breweries (Forbes, 2018). No data for the demographics of these workers exists right now, but informal observations within the industry suggest demographics for workers and patrons tend to skew white, male, and straight. In the restaurant industry as a whole, there are 147 million restaurant workers. Six million, or 4% of the workers are women (Watson, n.d.).

Since 2001, the average beer drinker by demographic is a white male, 39 years old, highly educated, and upper middle class. Currently, patronage for craft breweries is as follows: 75% male, 25% female; 60% White, 10% African American, 21% Hispanic, 9% Asian/Other (Brewers Association, 2016). The significance of these demographics go beyond the numbers.

The fact that straight, white men dominate craft beer is not alone an issue of concern. However, it becomes the center of a broader narrative when women, racial/ethnic minorities, and people who are not heterosexual in the craft beer world feel isolated (Roth, 2018). Some are even treated unfairly, or are threatened and attacked (Byron, 2017; Gribbins, 2018). In the service industry as a whole, 60% of women report sexual violence on the job. Organizations such as Chicago based non-profit Healing to Action are attempting to rectify that. In addition to this, there are currently a few other campaigns and companies that aim to raise awareness on diversity issues in the beer industry.

There are a few ways in which media has been used to encourage diversity in the beer industry. For example, in April of 2017, Heineken produced the “World’s Apart” campaign. Before the release of the campaign, Heineken conducted research with human behavior expert Chris Brauer. They found that creating a common ground between people relies on tolerance, empathy, creating mutual goals, and shared identities (“Insight & Strategy: Worlds Apart,” n.d.). The result was a four-minute video advertisement produced in partnership with the non-profit organization The Human Library. The video depicts pairs of people with instructions to build bar stools together. After completing the construction, they are directed to a bar to drink pints of Heineken, discuss personal traits they have in common, and discover polarizing differences. The advertisement was filmed in the United Kingdom and was placed directly online, not aired on

television. While some have stated that Heineken made the ad in response to criticisms received on previous ads, much of the feedback was positive. The ad earned thirteen-million views within a month (Digital Training Academy, 2018). This advertisement shows that beer can be a unifier for people who have opposing perspectives.

Additionally, Los Angeles-based promotional company Dope & Dank encourages multicultural participation in craft beer through the use of merchandising, promotions, social media, and live events. Dope & Dank began in 2017 when Beny Ashburn and Teo Hunter saw a lack of conversation about diversity in craft beer. “As the craft beer industry cascades into metro areas, the idea of embracing diversity and all that comes from these two worlds colliding are so very valuable to our growth as a people,” they note (Hunter, 2017). Dope & Dank hosts events centered around beer culture, produce video content, and post social media content. The founders have also made appearances on television to discuss beer and diversity. Their merchandise includes slogans “Brown People Love Beer” and “Black People Love Beer” as a means of breaking through the diversity barrier (“Merch,” n.d.).

Finally, Good Beer Hunting, an editorial- and design-focused company that produces web content and sponsors beer industry events, produced a story series titled “Humanity in Hospitality” (Good Beer Hunting, 2017). In January 2018, they partnered with “Healing for Action” as a means to highlight gender-based discrimination and violence in the brewing industry. “Humanity in Hospitality” features stories on sexist can and bottle labels, sexual harassment in the taproom, and misogynistic content on social media. While these stories are comprehensive accounts of discrimination in the workplace, the story series does not go beyond online journalism.

There have been a few ways in which different companies have created campaigns to encourage diversity in the beer industry, but there is still more that can be done. A campaign focused on creating a dialogue of inclusivity — without accusing majority demographics of segregation or using targeting or tokenism as a means to reach a diverse audience — has not been produced. (Ho, 2017). It is this gap in communication that I hope to fill with this creative project. I used the following guiding questions as a foundation:

1. How might transmedia storytelling be used to encourage representations of different cultures within craft beer in Indiana?
2. Can a transmedia campaign walk the fine line of encouraging participation without alienating potential participants?
3. How do industry workers of various backgrounds view diversity in craft beer?



## **Literature Review**

### **Transmedia Storytelling and Marketing**

This literature review draws on research from transmedia storytelling and marketing, and how those elements are implemented and are evolving in modern beer industries. Transmedia storytelling can be defined as “telling a story across multiple platforms, preferably allowing audience participation, such that each successive platform heightens the audience’ enjoyment” (Pratten, 2015). Jenkins popularized the term, opening up a discourse about how using various platforms to tell a story can create new and unique experiences for users and consumers (Jenkins, 2003, 2006). While transmedia has found considerable successes through the entertainment industry, it is also used as a marketing tool. Those who produce this content, notes Zeiser (2015, para. 25) “...must harness all the available platforms and channels available in today’s media landscape. Media content and its marketing must be transmedia.” She adds, “...the core of transmedia is something you’re already doing. You’re already engaging audiences with your narrative using various media. Through both traditional and mobile media, you’re reaching them wherever they are.” (p. 16)

### **Advertising in Traditional Brewery Spaces**

The beer industry in the United States has a distinct market when it comes to advertising. Appealing to a market that is only 21 years of age or older narrows the target audience. The industry cannot ethically advertise to those who are legally too young to drink alcohol (Fitzgerald, 2016). The Beer Institute, a national trade organization that represents the American brewing industry, publishes the Advertising and Marketing Code (Beer Institute, 2015) that is

applicable for all members, but is primarily targeted toward large, corporate breweries. It defines ethical beer advertising and marketing practices:

- Beer advertising should not suggest directly or indirectly that any of the laws applicable to the sale and consumption of beer should not be complied with.
- Brewers should adhere to contemporary standards of good taste applicable to all commercial advertising and consistent with the medium or context in which the advertising appears.
- Advertising themes, creative aspects, and placements should reflect the fact that Brewers are responsible corporate citizens.
- Brewers strongly oppose abuse or inappropriate consumption of their products.

While this code sets out to guide the largest and most valuable breweries in the United States to keep a certain standard of morality when advertising to broad and unique audiences, an increasing amount of criticism of corporate breweries has led people to support craft breweries at an accelerated rate.

Budweiser is the second most valuable beverage brand worldwide, and the most valuable alcoholic beverage brand in the country. Anheuser-Busch, the company that owns Budweiser as well as 22 other breweries, spent \$1.92 billion on advertising in 2016 (Statista, 2017). Their use of marketing involved rebranding their current products, sponsoring sports teams and sporting events, creating advertising campaigns that are seen by millions of people, and using mobile games to advertise their products (Danao, 2017). While most audiences viewed their 2017 Super Bowl commercial positively (Monllos, 2017), some of their more recent efforts have been less

successful. The profitability of Anheuser-Busch (ABInBev) has been declining since 1989. In addition, their acquisition by the Belgian company InBev in 2008 received much controversy (Dan, 2016). In an attempt to regain control of their brand, they changed labels of the 12oz Budweiser cans to say “America” rather than “Budweiser”. This garnered criticism from some groups because a Belgian company made a beer that boldly stated “America” (Dan, 2016; Matyszczyk, 2016). Although corporate breweries remain profitable, craft breweries are seeing a rise in market shares (Watson & Herz, 2018).

### **Craft Beer**

The craft beer industry grew substantially between 2000 and 2017 (Brewers Association, 2017a). Many forms of digital marketing are used making it more modern, and less tied to the same level of tradition that large breweries are. Craft brewing took root in the 1970s after President Carter legalized homebrewing in 1978 (McCullough, Berning, & Hanson, 2019). Although there were more notable successes in certain regions, craft breweries did not gain visible traction across the nation until approximately 2010 (Figure 1). As of 2018, there were more than 7,000 craft breweries in the United States, which is a staggering increase from the 103 breweries that existed in 1976 (Snider, 2018).

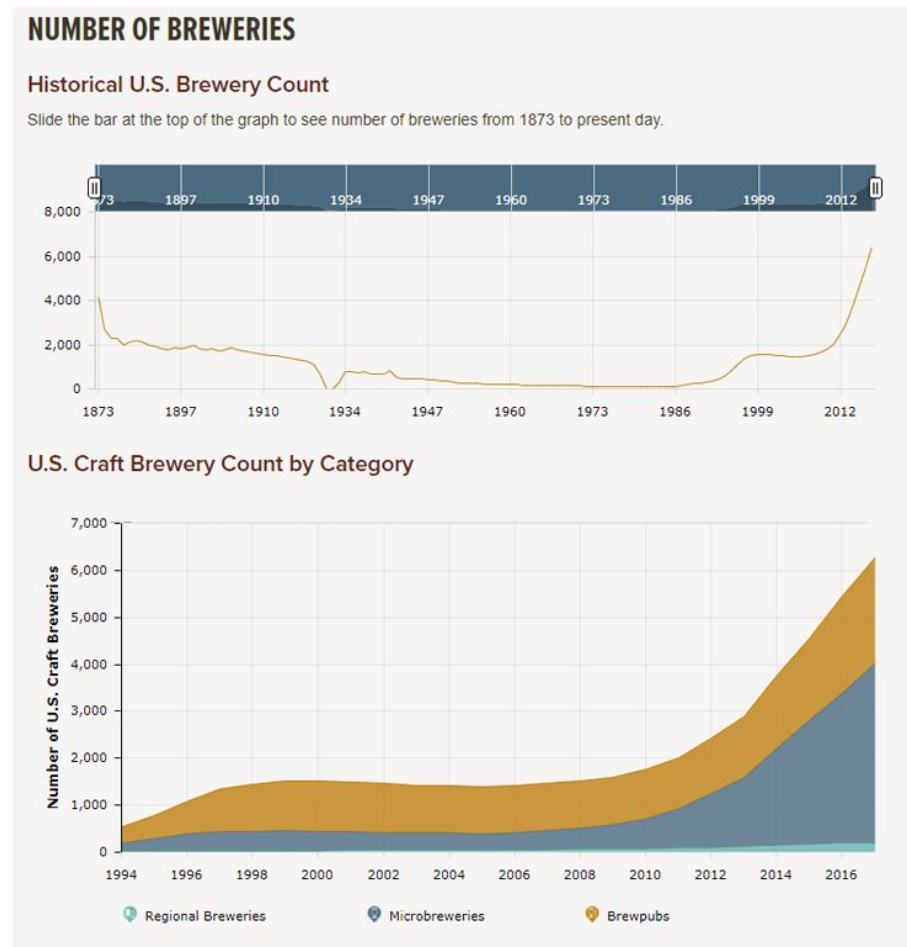


Figure 1. United States brewery counts. (Brewers Association, 2017a)

The Brewer's Association (Brewers Association, n.d.) defines craft beer as:

**Small** — Annual production of 6 million barrels of beer or less (approximately 3 percent of U.S. annual sales). Beer production is attributed to the rules of alternating proprietorships.

***Independent*** — Less than 25 percent of the craft brewery is owned or controlled (or equivalent economic interest) by an alcohol industry member that is not itself a craft brewer.

***Brewer*** — Has a TTB Brewer's Notice and makes beer

As stated before, craft breweries are less tied to tradition than corporate breweries. As a result of this, craft breweries have more freedom to explore and differentiate their own forms of expression. This is important to the project because craft breweries allow for a more intimate approach for community outreach and inclusivity.

According to the Wall Street Journal, ABInBev shipped 16 million barrels in 2016, which is a nearly-50-percent decrease from the 30 million barrels they shipped in 2013. With the increase in popularity of craft breweries, 44% of people aged 21 to 27 have never consumed Budweiser (Schiavenza, 2014). In response to the growth of craft beer, ABInBev has started producing what some people call “crafty” beer. This is seen as an attempt to disguise their company. Buying out or creating beer brands that produce craft-type beer help them fit within the craft beer trend, in addition to using marketing, branding, and design that mimics what modern craft breweries are producing (Brewers Association, 2012).

**Craft Beer Marketing and Transmedia**

Brewing beer has been traced back to as early as 5,000 BCE (Mosher, 2017), but the American craft beer industry is a modern endeavor, using experimental brewing techniques, low-budget advertising, and placemaking to differentiate brewer from brewer.

**Rules and guidelines.**

The craft brewing industry creates an incredible amount of media content for marketing and advertising. As a response, the Brewer's Association published rules and guidelines (Brewers Association, 2017b) for how to market, label, and present a brewery. The "Marketing and Advertising Code" includes suggestions for producing ethical content, as well as a protocol on how to form a complaint against violations against marketing and advertising from other breweries:

- Beer advertising shall portray beer in a socially responsible and respectful way. This can include depicting people enjoying their lives and socializing while beer is present and being consumed in a responsible manner.
- Brewers will use a consistent audience measurement source recognized by the advertising industry (such as, but not limited to, ComScore and Nielsen NetRatings) to determine whether digital media placements are reasonably expected to satisfy the Brewers Association Marketing Code.

The fact that large-scale marketing codes exist illustrates how seriously craft breweries are beginning to take their public image, not just their image in the pub.

In addition to large-scale codes, independent guides have begun to emerge as craft beer takes a strong foothold and brewers hope to market their brands more effectively.

Indianapolis-based marketing firm CODO specializes in branding craft breweries. In 2017, the firm created the Craft Beer Branding Guide (Arthur & Fague, 2017) which details practical ways to promote and brand a brewery. Using examples of their own interior design, label design, package design, and web design, the guide presents different marketing techniques available to craft breweries. Brewery marketing is an important facet of expressing their brand to the public.

### **Craft Beer Marketing**

Package and label design, interior and environment design, video and photography, and website and social media usage are common and successful marketing techniques for breweries. Package and Label design are influential in consumer product choice (Mohebbi, 2014). Alluring package design is one of the most important strategies a company can use to differentiate their brand (Stoll, Baecke, & Kenning, 2008). Other research suggests that the aesthetics of a product has a more meaningful impact on decision-making than other factors such as novelty, cultural significance, and ideology of the product (Chang & Wu, 2007).

### **Case Study - Upland Brewing Company**

Bloomington, Indiana branding firm Young and Laramore was hired by the Upland Brewing Company to update their branding and produce different forms of marketing. Upland was founded in Bloomington in 1998 and is one of the largest breweries by distribution in Indiana (Indy Craft Brew, 2018). The purpose of this rebranding was to modernize that appearance of the company and to emphasize storytelling. Cross-platform branding included “a reworked logo and entirely new labels, carriers, coasters, posters, tap handles and trucks” (Young & Laramore, n.d.). The brand update (Figure 2) and marketing campaign was considered successful and resulted in a 40% increase in overall package sales.



Figure 2. Upland Brewing Co's logo before and after rebrand(Young & Laramore, n.d.).

### Transmedia Marketing in Craft Beer

There is currently little literature on the use or effectiveness of transmedia storytelling and marketing in the craft brewing industry. Despite this, there are examples in the beer industry of transmedia storytelling. Aeronaut Brewing Co. produced one modern example of the use of transmedia marketing in craft beer. Aeronaut partnered with the band *The Lights Out* to create an album to be paired with one of their beers, Intergalaxyc T.R.I.P IPA (Crowell, 2016). When it was introduced the beer label contained instructions to download the music. At the time of production, the only way to get the music was to buy the beer (thelightsoutband, 2016). Although now available to the public, the project created a unique experience for beer drinkers through unique label design and game-like instructions to access exclusive music.

The beer-media company Dope & Dank is another modern example of transmedia marketing. The company creates social media posts, merchandising, event sponsorship, and collaboration beers. These cooperative brews support “diversity within the craft beer industry so that...breweries look as diverse as the communities they reside in.” (Hunter, 2017). Although Dope and Dank's model for media production could be potentially successful as a model for new



forms of advertising and marketing in the beer industry, more can be done to ensure outreach and inclusivity.

Research for this study reveals two important gaps in knowledge: first, large companies such as ABInBev have extensive budgets for elaborate advertising and marketing, and craft breweries do not. Transmedia marketing and storytelling might provide cost-effective design, marketing, and innovative advertising. Second, although no reputable public source for statistics exists regarding the demographics of the people who work in the craft brewery industry, craft breweries typically provide more intimate spaces where they can directly engage with their neighboring communities using media and marketing. These gaps show that although craft breweries have the social means to be more hands on in their communities, there are still disparities when it comes to outreach and education using media.

### Project Design

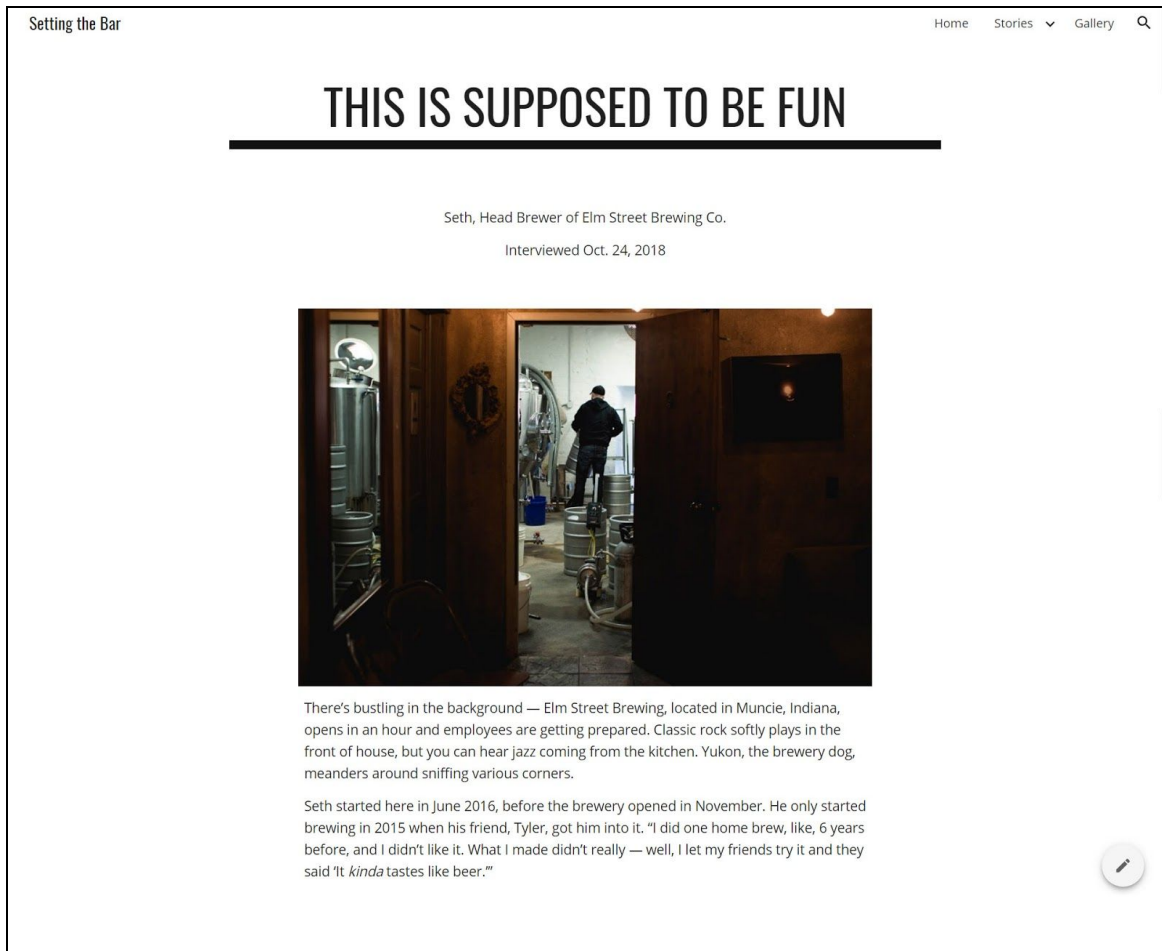
Following a transmedia structure, the project was divided into three phases: a photo and interview series with brewery employees, a design campaign, a card game for brewery employees, and an activity book for brewery patrons. Users were able to interact with any or all of the elements in the transmedia campaign.

The journalistic photo and interview series showcased the people who work in the craft beer industry and their perceptions of their working environment. This project drew inspiration from several existing projects. [Humans of New York](#) (Stanton, 2015) inspired storytelling alongside portrait photography. The work of photographers [Diane Arbus](#) (Arbus, 1997), [Jarod Lew](#) (Lew, n.d.), and [Richard Beaven](#) (Beaven, n.d.) are more distinctly visual storytelling. Each of these photographers document niche cultures such as circus workers, a suburban city in the United States, and voters before and after Donald Trump was elected in 2016, respectively. Good Beer Hunting uses a photo and story series called [b-Roll](#) (Good Beer Hunting, n.d.) through which contributors share photos and captions of what the beer world looks like from the perspective of people who are immersed in the culture. I modeled the photography in my project after these sources because they showed subcultures in simple and unstaged storytelling.

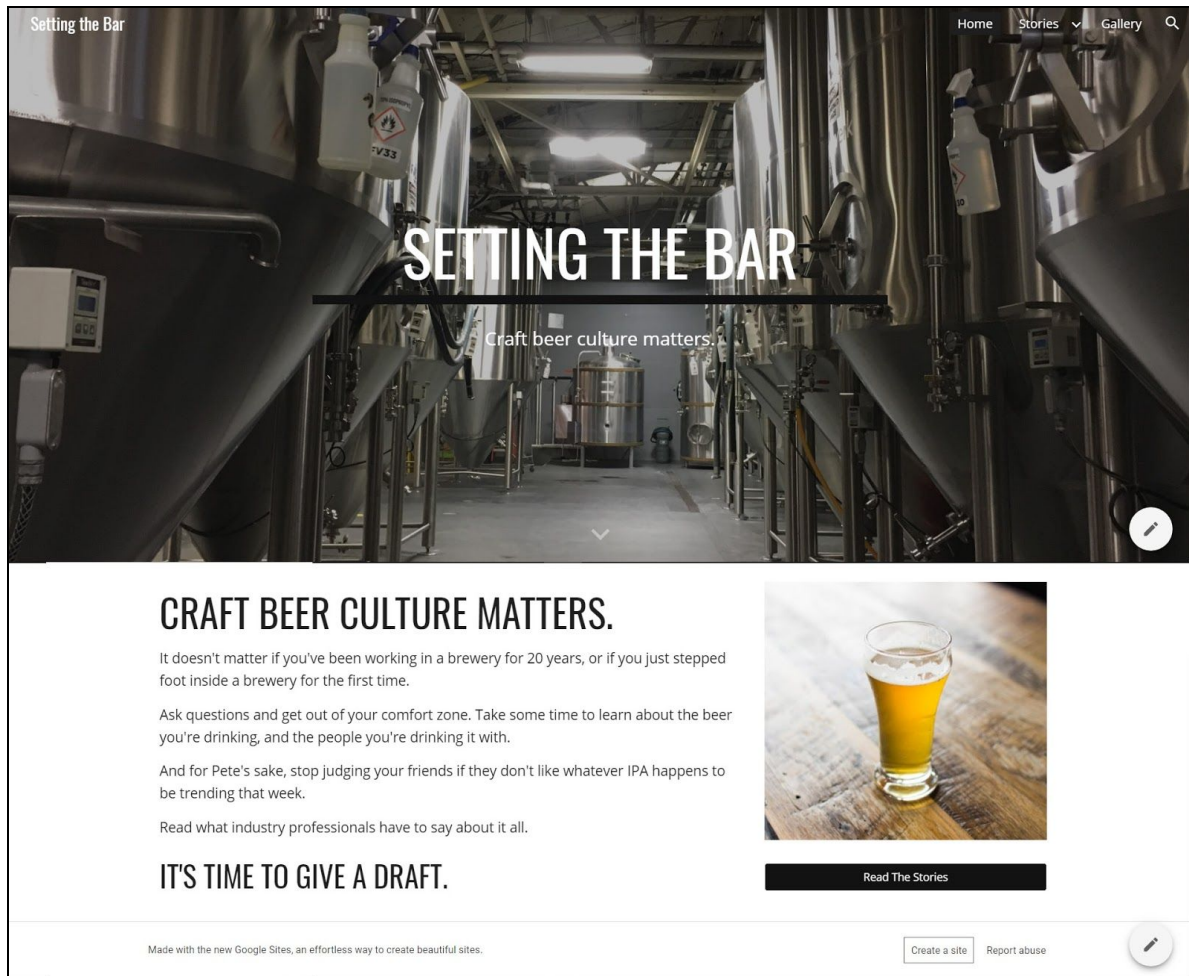
Interviews with beer industry professionals allowed them to express their perspective on inclusivity and diversity within their brewery of employment and through the industry as a whole. The interviews were later analyzed using affinity mapping in order to categorize what the interviewees responded into broader themes. Affinity mapping is a process where data, often gathered from ethnographic research, is compiled and then organized into different tiers. The information gathered from the interview was divided into three main sections: commerce,

community, and communication. I interviewed six people that are involved in the craft beer industry in Indiana. They included brewers, members of brewery related organizations, owners, and one person who works at a design firm that works with craft breweries. Questions such as, “How do you feel craft beer in Indiana does with dealing with inclusivity and empathy?” and, “How would you describe craft beer culture?” were designed to understand each person's perspective. The questions varied slightly from person to person as each individual had a different role, perspective, or experience within the craft beer industry. After interviewing each participant, I photographed them in their workplace to show them interacting with their environments.

After interviewing and photographing the participants, I decided the best way to present the information I gathered through a blog. Each interview was written in a journalistic style using audio recordings or notes taken during each interview. Each blog included 3-4 photographs of the participants and the brewery environment in which they work (Figure 3). A blog with pictures is an effective way of displaying this information because it is easy to consume and visually appealing. The blogs are housed on a website, [www.settingthebar.today](http://www.settingthebar.today). The landing page has the title “Setting the Bar” with a subhead of “Craft beer culture matters” (Figure 4). At the bottom of the page, is a description of the project as well as links to pages with the blog, a page about the design campaign, and a gallery of the photography.



*Figure 3.* Screen capture of a blog page.



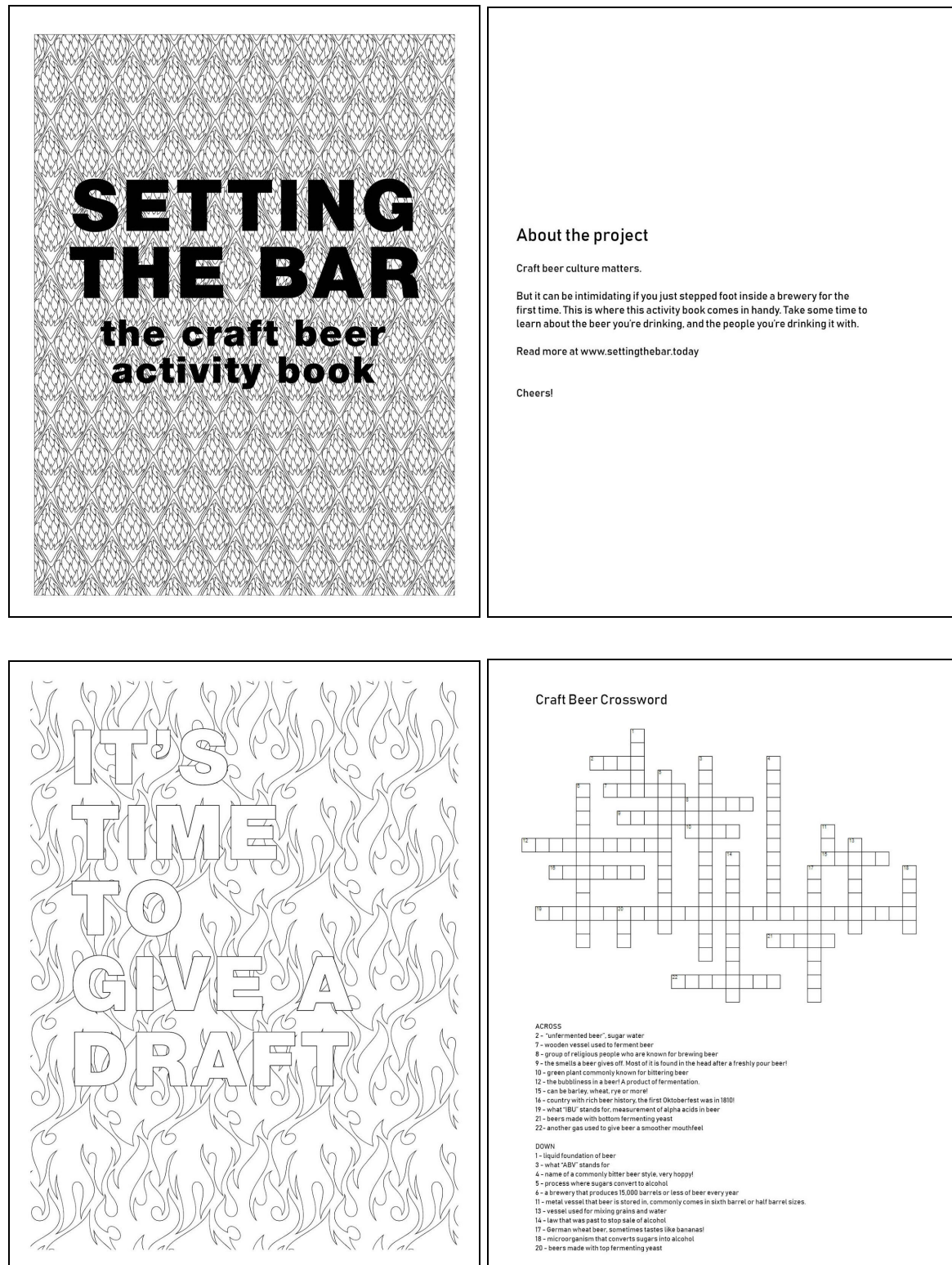
*Figure 4.* Screen Capture of the homepage.

Graphic design was incorporated as a way to advertise the project through a designed beer can label and posters that incorporated photos quotes from the interview series. Package design and aesthetic are often the most important factors for people choosing between two different items, above cultural important, novelty, and personal value (Chang & Wu, 2007; Stoll et al., 2008).

Two game elements are in the prototype phase. A game for employees will act as a training tool for brewery employees to be better equipped to interact with demographically different patrons and those who may be newcomers to the complex world of craft brewing.

Interviewees expressed that it is important that brewery employees are experts in their field and capable of helping patrons feel welcome and understood rather than overwhelmed, judged, or both. Gameplay is also an entertaining, low-cost way for craft breweries to promote an inclusive environment and educate their patrons and employees. The game is designed as a competitive card game where players will test their beer trivia and realistic problem solving skills. Andrew Castner of MashCraft noted the importance of being patient and helping customers by saying during his interview, “Just, be nice, put a great beer in front of them, and tell them what it is. If they know nothing about craft beer, be patient.”

A game for brewery patrons will be designed as an activity book (Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8). Adult coloring books are a current trend and will provide a low-stress way for current and potential patrons to learn more about beer and beer culture. This might reduce the pressure felt by newcomers when faced with many choices of beer and a sense of naivete about the nuances of the craft. This idea was reflected in several interviews: It can be difficult for patrons to feel comfortable coming into a craft brewery without much prior knowledge. Seth Ruskowsky of Elm Street reflected this sentiment by saying, “If you’re very new to it, it’s kinda hard to not be intimidated. And then you have some bigger names, that are kind of known to be beer snobs. Like, ‘How dare you order this beer. Now I’m going to roll my eyes.’”



Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8. Pages from the activity book.

These elements tie this project to a transmedia design. In an informal pair of blog posts, Henry Jenkins (Jenkins, 2009a, 2009b) proposed a series of principles that apply to transmedia stories. In the intervening decade, these principles have become a framework for the analysis and production of transmedia stories. Jenkins' principles include Spreadability vs. Drillability, Continuity vs. Multiplicity, Immersion vs. Extractability, Worldbuilding, Seriality, Subjectivity, and Performance. Many of these principles are engaged by this project:

- **Spreadability and Drillability** — While Jenkins has these elements put at opposition, my project pairs them together. Each element of the project has the ability to be spread via social media, but it is also drillable because it provides participants to engage deeply into the project.
- **Continuity vs. Multiplicity** — The current perception of craft beer is that it is a passive activity that is primarily enjoyed by straight white men with beards, and a goal of this project is to expand on that idea: to break the canon and build it into something else.
- **Extraction** — This project has an extractability element because of the cans, which have the designed labels on them, are able to be taken.
- **World building** — This projects encourages people to form more complete understandings of craft beer culture. This is a form of world building because this project encourages participants to form deeper understandings of craft beer and to add their own narratives into the story.



- **Seriality** — The continuation of the narrative across different formats and platforms demonstrates seriality. In order to get a fuller understanding, the participants are encouraged to participate in all facets of the project.
- **Subjectivity** — The interviews conducted in this project show that each perspective shows a slightly different story about inclusivity in craft beer as a whole.
- **Performance** — The forthcoming game adds a performance element - the participants are no longer just consuming media, they are now actively a part of the narrative.

These transmedia storytelling principles guided the construction of this project. It is titled, “Setting the Bar: It’s time to give a draft,” to stress high standards in the craft beer industry.

### **Setting the Bar: It's Time to Give a Draft**

Results from affinity mapping showed that responses were mainly divided into three sections: commerce, community, and communication. Commerce related to the ways the brewery is marketed or branded, the growth and change of the craft beer industry, and how a brewery's identity can affect whether or not people will go there. Marketing and branding were important to interviewees because it is an important way for breweries to create brand identity. Isaac Arthur of CODO Design said, "You are never going to achieve what you want if you don't want to market." The growth and change of the craft beer industry was also an important factor in how interviewees perceived the commerce of their company. Most interviewees echoed that because the supply of craft beer is growing faster than the demand, it is becoming harder to stand out as a unique business. Having a sustainable business model is important to remaining relevant through the next few years.

Sticking to an emerging identity was important to interviewees. Clay Robinson of Sun King Brewing said, "I think you just find your place by being there," when asked how a brewery finds its foothold in a neighborhood. While many participants responded similarly to the importance of creating a welcoming environment for patrons, Andrew Castner mentioned that not only are many elements in craft beer "not scary," a lot of them have repetitive design elements that can make one place not seem unique when compared to other breweries.

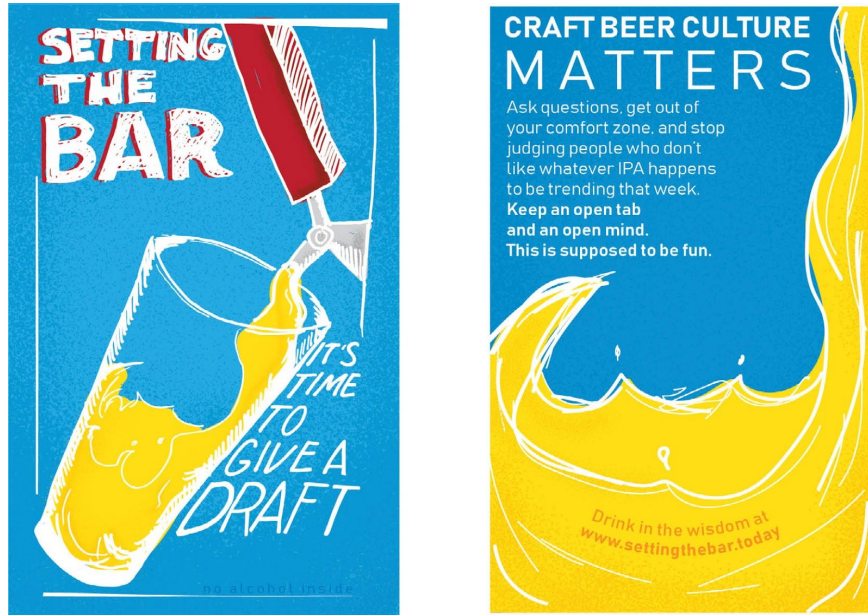
While many breweries strive to stand out from the rest, interviewees noted, craft breweries in Indiana are an inclusive, tight-knit community. Eilise Lane of Scarlet Lane Brewing said, "It's a newer community in craft beer. It's still shaky ground out here. We're not quite to that established place yet." Respondents reflected that most people involved are open-minded

and willing to shut-out community members who do not share their goals of broad inclusion. Seth Ruskowsky of Elm Street Brewing Company reflected this by saying, “Based off of the guys I know really well, if someone makes really awesome beer but is a dick, everyone would be like ‘screw those guys.’” He explains that even though most everyone in the beer industry is more inclusive by nature, “There’s a bunch of bearded white dudes. There’s definitely a demographic for the way it is. I don’t know why it has to be that way. I don’t think it has to be that way.” A common sentiment that is reflected across all of the interviewees is that women and minorities are underrepresented. Andrew Castner explained that “70-75% of craft beer consumers in Indiana are white males between the ages of 25 to 45.” Megan Pelsor, of the Pink Boots Society, focuses on making sure to be a resource for other women in the beer industry by organizing networking and other beer related events. Eilise Lane, who is also a member of the Pink Boots Society, stated, “There are always going to be people who don’t respect you,” and she adds that the only people not welcome at her brewery are “hateful people. I’ve asked people to never come back and I’m okay with that.” Lane adds that even though there is still room to grow, that the craft beer community is like family, “You think about each other and take care of each other.” The foundation for this community is the way a brewery interacts with other breweries, and with the people who come into their taproom.

Communication for all participants was an important factor whether it was with other breweries, within the company, or with customers. Communication with other breweries was important to many respondents. Respondents said that because it is a close community, that they need to help each other out. Seth Ruskowsky reflected this by describing how communicating with nearby breweries has been beneficial in trading ingredients and recipes, and he added,

“We’re all just trying to lift each other up.” Pelsor described that not only is it important to communicate with other breweries, but within your place of employment is also key. She was the first female brewer and female lab technician. When she got pregnant, Sun King wrote a new maternity clause and worked with her to create a breast-pumping room for employees. “They just don’t know,” she said about the need for accommodation. “It’s an awkward conversation to have with the owner of your company.” Open communication with customers was also an important theme in the participant's interviews. Interviewees responded that the best way to make sure you attract new customers and maintain their loyalty is by ensuring patience with people who do not know much about craft beer, by being involved in the community and by supporting diverse community groups.

These results informed the design campaign and future game design. I chose the title, “Setting the Bar: It’s time to give a draft,” because it implies the need for people in the industry to care more about craft beer. The design campaign—which included beer can labels and posters—marketed the project as a whole and included quotes such as “Craft beer has soul,” and imagery from the interview series. I designed the beer labels using bright primary colors because it would allow for high visibility and contrast for the viewers (Figures 9 and 10). The labels were designed in a hand drawn style that would exemplify more of the nature of the craft beer industry as described by interviewees: a hands-on and front-line community.



*Figures 9 (left) and 10. Can Label Design, front and back.*

The labels were also used as a means to advertise the project with a description about the importance of not judging others in the taproom. The posters used quotes from the interviews I conducted. The posters were designed to be bright, bold, and legible (Figures 11, 12, and 13). Each piece supplemented the project's purpose: to increase inclusivity and empathy within craft beer.



*Figures 11 (from left), 12, and 13. Posters for the design campaign.*

The card game will have two card types: Challenge and Trivia cards (Figure 14). Challenge cards will encourage players to imagine scenarios in which they might find themselves while in a brewery setting. For example, one card drawn by a player could read, “One of your coworkers starts talking politics near customers. How do you react?” Trivia cards will ask beer trivia questions so that brewery employees can expand and maintain their beer knowledge. The card game will be turn-based. Players will be given points for each question they answer correctly.



*Figure 14.* A digital mock up of the card game.

## Discussion

This project developed a campaign that focused on encouraging inclusivity within the craft beer community, which then could be reworked and applied to areas outside of craft beer culture. I investigated the disparities that exist in this culture through interviews with industry professionals. These interviews were used to create a transmedia campaign aimed for both industry professionals and patrons of craft beer. It was built to encourage empathetic dialogue and education for how people can be active participants in the narrative of making craft beer more inclusive.

I picked craft beer as a subculture to explore perceptions of inclusivity and empathy for several reasons. Having been involved with Indiana's craft beer culture since turning 21, I have also tended bar in two craft breweries since. I experienced both inclusivity and discrimination in my brief tenure working in breweries. Though I have never faced discrimination by an employer, I have heard personal accounts of employees who have. With these personal experiences in mind, I felt a need to explore the experiences of other employees and employers within Indiana's craft beer industry. I set out to broaden my own understanding of craft beer culture in Indiana while sharing those perspectives with a broader audience. This project is focused on Indiana craft beer because that is where I live, and wanted to focus on one geographic area of beer culture.

The craft beer industry is growing rapidly. There are more new craft breweries than there are established and renowned breweries — it's an active, burgeoning market. These newer businesses have an opportunity to create spaces that are welcoming from day one. Older, more



established breweries can use this time to restructure their operations and be seen as inclusive spaces to drink craft beer.

Perceptions of beer culture were investigated in this project through a photojournalistic interview series with industry professionals in Indiana. Conducting interviews allowed discourse over the state of craft beer culture in Indiana and influenced these industry workers to consider their place within the culture. The interviews I conducted showed that although most people believe craft beer to be an inclusive subculture, it tends to be dominated by white, heterosexual males. In addition, many interviewees shared that they were not sure how to market craft beer to a more diverse customer base despite wanting to be perceived as being open to all. The interviewees also reflected that more can be done to improve inclusion. Many respondents also said that they felt like there was a lack of education about beer. These factors show that a project like this adds value to craft beer culture.

I used Google Analytics to develop a deeper understanding of how effective the blog was. I published the website on January 22, 2019, and posted each story through social media. From January 22 through March 1, there have been 129 users. Most users clicked on the link through Facebook. Users primarily browsed the website using mobile devices. The peak use date was January 24, 2019, with 37 unique viewers.

Although the numbers behind the use of the website are important, they do not give a full account of how people used the website, or will in coming months. The project is still very young. One user said, "I think this is really well built. I like that it isn't too long and the pictures break up the text." In addition, Kate Poling, shift manager and bartender from Elm Street Brewing Company, said of the blog, "Making sure people feel welcome is so important. I really

agree with a lot of what these people are saying.” She added, “I also like the tone used. I felt like I was talking to them as I was reading. And the website just flows really well.”

This blog is proving effective as a way to display this information. Posts were written to be straightforward and interesting to audiences with varying levels of craft beer knowledge. I avoided using technical terms and incorporating the candid language that the interviewers used. Despite this, I think the project could have been more aggressively marketed. Posting more than two stories a week, posting the link in other places beyond Facebook and Instagram, or timing the design campaign to the website launch would likely improve traffic.

Though the academic phase of this project is coming to a close, the storytelling is not. Through development of the complete and published elements of this creative project I have determined that the two game-like elements as training and educational tools are an effective way to encourage inclusivity in craft beer. Though at the time of this writing they are being prototyped, they will be completed in the coming months. These game elements will act as a response to what the interviewees expressed.

It is important to expand current perceptions of craft beer and craft beer culture to show people that it is a meaningful and positive community. The research supporting this project shows that while craft beer is currently a white male dominated culture, it aspires to be fully inclusive. This project will aid in bridging the gap between people who work in craft beer, current craft beer patrons, and people not yet interested in craft beer. Empathy and inclusion start with shared experience. “I am a firm believer in the people” Abraham Lincoln is often quoted as saying. “If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts, and beer (Warner, 2010).”

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